

Farm & Forest

Working together to conserve active farms and forests in King County

September 2000

Washington FarmLink A new program for transitioning farms

Agriculture contributes greatly to the economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities in Washington. It provides food, jobs, a lifestyle, open space, and environmental benefits. But many farmers are retiring, land costs are rising, and agricultural land is being subdivided and devel-



opments. FarmLink is a joint project of the King County Agricultural Commission and the Snohomish County Agricultural Advisory Board.

FarmLink Benefits:

- Farmers who want their operation to continue after they retire.
- Farmers facing operational and/or transitional challenges.
- Farm managers who want to eventually own their own farm.
- Agriculture service providers seeking new career opportunities.
- Landowners with underutilized or unused farmland.
- Farmers looking for a partner to operate a new enterprise on their farms.

continued on page 2...

FarmLink Workshops

November 3: Cooperative Extension Office in Everett

January 5: SeaTac Marriott Hotel
For more information on these workshops or more information about FarmLink, log on to <http://wafarmlink.org> or call Steve Evans (206) 296-7824 or email, Steve.Evans@metrokc.gov

oped. Such pressures make it critical to establish the next generation of farmers. FarmLink is a program that bridges the gap by matching people wanting to get started in agriculture with experienced and dedicated farmers. FarmLink also provides resources and technical expertise to new farmers. The goal of FarmLink is to keep our rural communities vital by assisting the farming community through

Profile of Snoqualmie Valley Forest Stewards: Paul and Paula Butzi

Paul and Paula Butzi own 120 acres of forestland near Duvall that they purchased in 1998. They recently completed the Forest Stewardship class offered to landowners in King County. They have 100 acres of their property enrolled in the Forestland program and receive a 70% discount on their property tax by agreeing to keep it as forestland. The following interview with the Butzi's was conducted by Steve Sax, Forestry Education Coordinator for WSU Cooperative Extension.

Why were you interested in purchasing forest land?

At first, we just wanted enough space to provide some privacy and a sense of isolation. As we looked, we began to realize that we actually wanted a fairly large space, and that if

we had a larger space, there were lots of stewardship opportunities. Having a place to raise our children and being able to leave them with a legacy of a well managed forest was very important to us. We also wanted a diversity of plants and wildlife on the site. After looking at several properties, this was the one that best met our criteria.

Why did you take the Forest Stewardship Class?

Since moving to Seattle 17 years ago, we have primarily lived in the suburbs and didn't know much about managing the forests around us. One hundred acres is a lot of land to manage when you're working and raising a family. We wanted to increase our knowledge of forestry and learn how to manage our



A Forest Stewardship Class Field Session

property responsibly and effectively. Even if we hire people to do the work, we need to understand the issues so that we can set appropriate goals and select appropriate strategies.

continued on page 4...

Livestock Management Ordinance

The primary purpose of the Livestock Management Ordinance (LMO) is to promote the raising and keeping of livestock in King County with a comprehensive management approach while protecting salmonid habitat and water quality.

On parcels zoned to allow livestock, the LMO sets densities and management standards.

Allowable densities depend upon the size of a parcel and the type of livestock. Livestock owners can comply with the ordinance by meeting LMO standards on their own, or by developing and implementing a Farm Management Plan with assistance from the King Conservation District (free of charge). Standards in the LMO and the practices in farm management plans are known as best management practices (BMP's). BMP's are practices that minimize non-point pollution.

Examples of Best Management Practices identified in the LMO include:

- **Manure Management:** proper storage and location of manure piles to prevent leachate and runoff from reaching streams or wetlands.
- **Wetland & Stream Corridor Management:** fencing to exclude animals from wetlands and streams. The width of the fenced buffer is based on a landowner's decision to develop and implement a farm management plan and the presence of diverse mature vegetation.



- **Confinement Area Management:** vegetative filter strip downslope of confinement areas that are close to streams, wetlands, or other waterways. Roof drains of buildings in the confinement area are to be diverted away from the confinement area.

The King County Council adopted the LMO in 1994. An inter-departmental enforcement strategy has been developed between the County's Department of Natural Resources and Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES). This strategy offers education and technical assistance to the livestock owners, while initiating the necessary enforcement steps within DDES Code Enforcement.

While many livestock owners were in compliance with the LMO, others have voluntarily complied with the LMO after realizing that BMP's benefit their property, their livestock and our natural resources.

For more information about the LMO, upcoming classes or the new BMP cost-share program, please contact **Laurie Clinton**, Livestock Program Coordinator, at (206) 296-1471.

FarmLink from page 1...

- Beginning farmers who have the knowledge and desire, but lack land.

FarmLink Programs

FarmLink offers a number of programs that can be tailored to the needs of the participants, including: *The New to Farming Program, The Farm Transition Program, The Farm/Farmer Matching Program, A non-profit resource center, a counseling program, a communications plan and mentoring/apprenticeship programs.*

How Does it Work?

Land owners and aspiring farmers complete a questionnaire describing their goals, situations and resource needs. Data from completed questionnaires are entered into a database and initially matched with likely prospects. Each initial match is screened for common goals and interests, as well as logistical requirements. Applicants are given lists of potential matches and can contact those farmers. FarmLink representatives will stay in contact over the long term to offer any additional counseling program resources on an as-needed basis.

NEW FACES!

Kristi McClelland joins forester Bill Loeber at King County Department of Natural Resources to assist rural forestland owners in preparing stewardship plans and implementing forest management strategies.

Kristi will concentrate primarily on the Cedar River and Issaquah Creek basins while Bill covers the rest of the county. Kristi can be reached at (206) 296-7820 and Bill's phone number is (206) 296-7821.

Kristi McClelland brings over 20 years of forestry experience: the first 8 years managing forest land and the last 12 assisting public and private forest land managers comply with forest rules and regulations. Kristi is committed to "helping landowners steward their forest lands within a landscape framework. Management decisions affect all the interrelated natural resources and should support healthy ecosystems."



Kristi McClelland (and son)



Rick Reinlasoder

Rick Reinlasoder joins the King County Department of Natural Resources Program as the new Livestock Program Specialist. He was raised on a small dairy on a 120-acre farm in western Montana. Along with his brother, he shares ownership of a flock of registered, prize-winning Suffolk sheep. He heads back to Montana to help with the sheep as often as possible and during show season. Rick graduated from Montana State University-Bozeman with a bachelor's degree in Animal Science. He was previously employed by the King Conservation District as a farm planner, providing technical assistance to livestock owners and learning about livestock-keeping in an urban county. The new position he fills will provide support and technical assistance for the raising and keeping of livestock in King County through implementation of the Livestock Management Ordinance. Rick's agricultural background and experience will be an asset to the program. Rick can be reached at (206) 263-6566.

Updates

Forest Outreach

The King County Forestry Staff have joined forces with a number of other agencies and organizations to develop a public education program about the importance of retaining King County's privately owned working forests. The collaborative group is in the process of developing a variety of educational materials including a slideshow that they will be presenting to audiences throughout the County. If you would like to receive additional information, be put on the group's mailing list, or host a presentation by a group representative, please contact Benj Wadsworth, King County Forestry Program, at (206) 296-7805, benj.wadsworth@metrokc.gov. Other organizations and agencies involved in the effort include the City of Seattle Urban Forest Coalition, the Environmental Home Center, Friends of Rock Creek, the King County Rural Forest Commission, The Cascade Land Conservancy, Livable Communities Coalition, the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Trust, Northwest Natural Resources Group, the University of Washington College of Forest Resources, Washington Environmental Council, Washington State University Cooperative Extension, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, and 1000 Friends of Washington.

Research

Benj Wadsworth, formerly a graduate student at the University of Washington College of Forest Resources and now working with the King County Forestry Program, recently completed his research on the values and attitudes of King County forest landowners. Thank you to the 381 of you who participated in the study! The study examined the reasons that people own and

sell forestland and whether or not they would be interested in managing their land cooperatively with neighboring landowners. If you would like a copy of the final report, please contact Benj at (206) 296-7805.

Executive Sims Emphasizes The Importance of Working Forests

King County Executive Ron Sims is very aware of the important role forests play in the protection of the Northwest's air quality, wildlife habitat, and watersheds. In March of 2000, he spoke at "Summit 2000", a conference that dealt with the viability of



King County Executive Ron Sims helping preserve our forests

private forestlands in Washington. He concluded "Ensuring the viability of forestland is the single most effective solution to most of the environmental issues we are facing." He challenged, "Let's work together while prevention is still attainable. Loss of our forestlands will require billions of dollars in cures."

Forests and the programs that support them are at the top of King County's Earth

Initiatives under Earth Legacy 2000. The county has a Transfer of Development Credits program designed to help landowners retain their forests. A comprehensive coached stewardship planning course is offered three times a year to help forestland owners develop thorough resource plans. Tax incentives are available for forestland owners with long-term stewardship plans. A variety of strategies is being developed to help ensure the critical connectivity of watersheds, wildlife corridors, forest products and trail corridors provided by a forested landscape.

Farm & Forest CONTACTS

Forestry

Kathy Creahan (206) 296-7809
Benj Wadsworth (206) 296-7805

Technical Forestry Questions

Bill Loeber (206) 296-7821
Kristi McClelland (206) 296-7820

Farming Questions

Steven Evans (206) 296-7824
Eric Nelson (206) 296-1469

Farmland Preservation Questions

Judy Herring (206) 296-1470

Livestock Questions

Laurie Clinton (206) 296-1471
Rick Reinlasoder (206) 263-6566

Email

firstname.lastname@metrokc.gov



What types of things did you learn in the class that were important to you and being a good steward of your property?

It was quite amazing; we learned so many things in the class and we want to learn more. It has been such a valuable tool for learning about forests and how to manage them. It really changed our objectives. We entered the class not wanting to do any management of our forest. The class taught us that there are lots of goals we have for our property, and we can manage for more than one at a time. While we were taking the class we realized that 'hands off' is just one management approach out of many, and we could surely better achieve our goals with more active involvement. It's possible to grow timber, and improve wildlife habitat, and help provide clean water all at the same time. We learned how to assess the health of the forest - the trees, animals, insects and fungus. All these things can be managed together, and when done correctly can leave you with a better forest than you started with.

What are your management objectives for your property?

We want to build our house soon and manage the land for diversity of wildlife and trees. One of the best parts of the class is that it helped us articulate more clearly what our goals are, and what actions we can take to advance those goals. Our goals went from "we want it to be a nice place" to nearly a page of detailed goals in our forest stewardship plan. Writing the forest stewardship plan was a very educational process, and we've now got a much better understanding of how we're going to manage different parts of the property. Some of the existing alder will need to be removed to help the Douglas fir grow faster. In other places we'll manage for the existing alder. We're interested in generating timber from the property and also want to create a healthy forest that we can leave to our kids and be proud of.

Would you recommend this class to other landowners?

Absolutely without question! We learned so much for the \$100 course fee. The speakers were great. Several of them exposed me to new ideas. Some of the speakers made some topics like fungus and disease, which I didn't think would interest me, very exciting. We didn't know what we wanted to do with our forest when we started the class. To best manage your property you need to learn about it and write your management plan yourself. Ten classes is a short amount of time to invest in something that you will be living with and enjoying every day for a long time.

Forest Stewardship classes are offered three times a year. The next one will be offered in the Maple Valley area in September. To find out more, contact Steve Sax, WSU Cooperative Extension Forestry Education Coordinator, at (206) 205-3132 or steve.sax@metrokc.gov



KING COUNTY

Water and Land Resources Division

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<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/lands/forestry.htm>
<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/lands/agricult.htm>

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Interested in Attending a Forestry or Agriculture Commission Meeting?

The **Forestry Commission** meets every 3rd Tuesday, 10:00 AM - Noon at the Mercer Community Center. For more information call **Benj Wadsworth** at (206) 296-7805.

The **Agriculture Commission** meets every 2nd Thursday at 4:00 PM at the Mercer Community Center. For more information call **Eric Nelson** at (206) 296-1469.



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